WFAA

6/23/77

Dear James McManus,

Your yesterday's letter with enclosure are helpful to me so despite a great time pressure to prepare for an FOIA hearing Thursday of today's mail I respond to you on the chance of being helpful to you and so that I may make a note for myself of the carbon. Ot herwise I'll forget.

Having read the text I know what happened. The same nice guys, young and probably fresh from a reading of Ben Hecht, have just done a similar thing to me. It will haunt me for a long time from what my increasing and not inconsiderable experience with official files and filing tells me.

It has to have been Bob Sirkin and Bill O'Reilly of WFAA. They are nice guys, they are able reporters , they just have to learn what reporting really is if it to be responsible, other than a sensation that can puff them with the station by wire attention.

They tried to get me to say that Ray's escape attempt was a conspiracy to kill him. That has to mature to become greasy kid stuff. But I did not want to lay them out on their own station so I evaded. Without my knowing it they fed UPI a story inventing my saying what I did not say and making the supposed paraphrase appear to be legit by taking what I did say and quoting it as relevant when it was addressed to another aspect. I never believed it and I didn't even suspect it. Years ago I told Ray he'd never make it unless he could nab a coal car if he made it over the fence. This is exactly what I said when he first got out on the 10th, that if there was no convenient slow train the dogs would get him.

When I got home I wrote and asked UPI to file a correction for the record. The morgues thus would have it and so would the FBI. No response.

The same pair, I feel confident, added to what my friend Dan Christensen had added to my work of years ago.

I'd love to know who your "stunned" committee source was "that the detailed report had become public." What else when it was printed in Miami magazine and Dan used it in his job application?

I guess the reason you could not reach an FBI spokesman for comment is because they did not want the story not used, did not want to have to say only "no comment" when they had checked the story out and they knew I had that, too. They have great fun with all the stories they can denounce, often the reporters, use such things to defend the FBI against everything and anything, and if all else fails fabricate to have records to cite.

They have done this with me in the case in court Thursday. It is on the King assassination but more importantly on the FOIA itself and what effort we can make to cut back on their campaign to destroy it if they can and frustrate it daily. I've got them calling the public record investigatory files, blacking out the names of their own agents in news stories on privacy claims, even a directive that they violate the law with me going back to 1969. I wish some of the major media would take in some of these proceedings that in my cases and not generally cut and dry. They'd learn about FOIA and the spooks.

I would put your 3rd graf differently: having been clobbered in its adventure in news faking the House assassins committee has opted the star-chamber approach, this far without any reported criticism of it.

If you really want to cover what can be covered, and for more reasons than your correct statement of cost/benefit I believe CBS will not want to. There are other approaches. I can give you every hidden name in all they've leaked and my prior files on all. It could be real Keystone Kops fun interviewing those characters and then the committee. Their last witness was Loran Hall. I know him well. They forced him to take the fifth. There is much he would love to talk about if protected against the committee. He was in on the anti-Castro plots. I'm sure the only reason the committee went through its charade of the 7th is for Sylvia Odio to eyeball all. This means she said "not the guy" or she'd have followed him as a witness. Locating Odion, no longer Odio, is easy. Thanks and best wishes,